

REMARKS

The Non-final Office Action of October 28, 2003 has been fully considered. In view of the above amendments and following comments, reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

STATUS OF THE CLAIMS

Claims 2-7, 9, 11-15, 17, 18, 20-23, and 25-34 are pending in the application.

Claims 1, 19, and 24 are cancelled herein.

Claims 2-5, 7, 9, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17, 20-23, 25, and 26 have been amended.

Claims 27-34 have been added.

Claims 8, 10, and 16 have been previously cancelled.

THE OFFICE ACTION

Claims 1, 7, 9, 15, 17, 19, and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Hawkins et al, US 5,088,724.

Claims 2-6, 20 and 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hawkins et al, US 5,088,724.

Claims 7, 15 and 17-18 rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese Patent translation JP 54-48927, Kobayashi for reasons of record.

Claims 7, 15 and 17-18 rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Biotteau, US 4,337,292, for reasons of record.

Claims 11-14, 22, and 25 were indicated as containing allowable subject matter.

Claims 11, 19-20, 22, and 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

Claim 24 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph.

The Present Amendment

The Applicants have cancelled independent claim 1 and dependent claims 19 and 24.

Applicants have rewritten claims 12, 14, 21, and 25, each previously indicated to contain allowable subject matter, as independent claims.

The current claims 2-7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, and 18, are amended to be directly or indirectly dependent from Claim 12, and therefore should be allowable.

The new claims 27-34 which parallel claims 2-7, 9, and 11, are directly or indirectly dependent from claim 14, and therefore should be allowable.

The current claims 20 and 22 are directly or indirectly dependent from claim 21, and therefore should be allowable.

Claim 26 is dependent from claim 25 and also should be as allowable as claim 25.

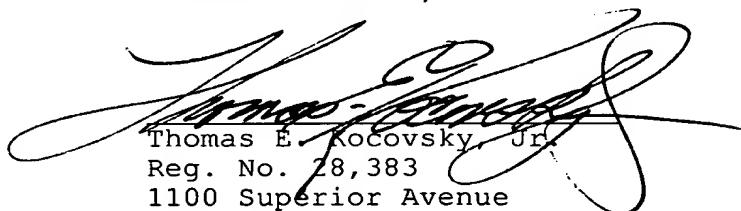
Claims 11 and 22 have been rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under U.S.C. 112, second paragraph.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above, Applicants submit that claims 2-7, 9, 11-15, 17, 18, 20-23, and 25-34 are in condition for allowance. An early allowance of all claims is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

FAY, SHARPE, FAGAN,
MINNICH & MCKEE, LLP



Thomas E. Kocovsky, Jr.
Reg. No. 28,383
1100 Superior Avenue
Seventh Floor
Cleveland, OH 44114-2518
(216) 861-5582